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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a methodology for studying the ideologies of social movements from a rhetorical perspective and tests the methodology by studying the ideology of the feminist movement. The methodology is a three-step approach: first, a descriptive analysis provides an operational definition of the group's ideology--its self-image, central goal, idealized vision of the future, and identification of its opponents; the second step is to classify the discourse used by groups within the movement according to amount, type, purpose, and audience; and the third step is a content analysis, showing the substantive and stylistic features of the discourse that the movement employs. This methodology was used to compare the rhetoric of three groups within the feminist movement: the National Organization for Women (NOW), Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), and "The Feminists." Results of this study's descriptive analysis and classification of discourse indicate strong ideological differences between the three groups, though the content analysis suggests that the groups merely emphasize different themes within a common ideology. The paper concludes that, with modifications, the methodology can be useful in the study of social movements. (RL)

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IDEOLOGICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN DISCOURSE: TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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This essay is based on my doctoral dissertation, completed at the University of Iowa in 1976. Special thanks to Bruce Gronbeck for his suggestions on earlier drafts of this article.

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IDEOLOGICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN DISCOURSE: TOWARD A METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

I.

An assumption fundamental to the field of speech has been the notion that a relationship of some sort exists between form and content.[1] While the form/content relationship has been discussed in a variety of contexts, the exact nature of the interaction of these two variables remains open to question. Some critics insist that the form a message takes increases or decreases its persuasiveness. Aristotle's observation that a speaker's style can be as persuasive as the arguments themselves is an ancient statement of this relationship,[2] while the discussion of the inseparableness of form and content by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca is a recent reformulation of this same idea:

> We refuse to separate the form of a discourse from its substance, to study stylistic structures and figures independently of the purpose they must achieve in the argumentation. We shall go even further. We know that there are forms of expression capable of producing an aesthetic effect, connected with harmony, rhythm, and other purely formal qualities and that such forms of expression can be of influence through the admiration, delight, relaxation, excitement, and the rise and fall of attention that they provoke without its being possible to analyze them directly in terms of the argumentation.[3]

Studies of social movements seem to have made special use of the content/form assumption, albeit indirectly for the most part. Cathcart, arguing that critics need to conceptualize social movements as essentially

rhetorical in nature, suggests that the form/content merger is what makes a movement rhetorical: "The form of a movement is a rhetorical form, one which gives substance to its rationale and purpose."[4] Wilkinson, taking Cathcart's work as a starting point, isolates the components necessary to a rhetorical definition of social movements: "Movements, rhetorically defined, are: languaging strategies by which a significantly vocal part of an established society, experiencing together a sustained dialectical tension growing out of moral (ethical) conflict, agitate to induce cooperation in others, either directly or indirectly, thereby affecting the status quo" [italics his].[5] Like Cathcart, he focuses on the interaction of substance (the nature of the conflict) and form (languaging strategies designed to deal with the conflict) as the special domain of the rhetorical critic. Campbell also deals with the form/content relationship as it functions in a social movement. Her study of women's liberation is grounded in the assumption that style and substance are interdependent; that "stylistic choices are deeply influenced by subject matter and context, and issues are formulated and shaped by stylistic strategies."[6]

Despite the accepted importance of the content/form interaction, however, methodologies which explicitly suggest how to make use of and apply this relationship to a range of rhetorical studies have been lacking. In this essay, I propose such a methodology which, although applicable to a variety of rhetorical studies, will be discussed here only as a way of analyzing social movements. I conceive of the form/content relationship as especially useful for studying social movements because: (1) an examination of both form and content allows for a more comprehensive treatment of a movement than if a single factor is isolated for study;

and (2) the foundation of a social movement--its ideology--is a model arena for studying the relationship between content and form since it embodies and presents a movement's substance and strategies in their clearest and most conspicuous forms.

As the body of doctrine which lies at the core of a group's persuasive efforts, an ideology serves both to promote in-group cohesiveness and to convert outside publics. Thus, the presence of an ideology is considered vital to a successful social movement. Blumer suggests the importance of ideologies when he states: "Without an ideology a social movement would grope along in an uncertain fashion and could scarcely maintain itself in the face of pointed opposition from outside groups. . . . it is a mechanism essential to the persisting and development of a movement."[7] King also sees a movement's ideology as a fundamental component: "The ideology of a movement encompasses most of what is essentially its culture. . . . it is, like a nation's constitution, the source from which a movement derives its rationale, its doctrine, its course, and its disciplinary principles."[8] To study the ideology as embodiment of a movement's rhetorical essence, then, does more than merely isolate one aspect of a social movement for study; it indeed gets at its integral core.

Several attempts have been made to study ideologies from a rhetorical perspective. Van Graber, for instance, seeks to explain black rhetoric by constructing an ideological framework from its discourse.[9] Such an approach receives support from Black, who argues that discourse reveals characteristics of its author and implied auditor and can be linked, in turn, to an ideology. He suggests that "the association between an idiom and an ideology is much more than a matter of arbitrary convention

or inexplicable accident. . . . There are strong and multifarious links between a style and an outlook."[10] Richard Weaver, too, posits that discourse is a clue to inner states. He argues that speakers' major argumentative premises as well as the grammatical categories they choose to use are keys to their primary views of existence.[11] He explores the implications of using different sentence types, nouns, adjectives, conjunctions, preopositions, and phrases to suggest different world views.

That more attempts to study ideologies have not been made, given their importance to the success of a movement, seems surprising. Much of this neglect probably is due to the fact that ideologies are intangible sets of ideas which are difficult to identify, isolate, and categorize. As Toch points out: "Ideologies may be systematic in the hands of systematic persons; they may be consistent if they are held by persons who prize consistency. On the other hand, in many ideologies, logic and other formal systems may take a back seat."[12] Then, too, the term "ideology" has taken on a range of connotations--many of them negative--which only complicate the picture more. John Adams' conception of ideology illustrates this point: "Ideology is the science of Idiocy. . . . It is the bathos, the theory, the art, the skill of diving and sinking in government. It was taught in the school of folly; but alas, Franklin, Targot, Rouchefoucauls, and Condorcet, under Tom Paine, were the great masters of that academy."[13] The diverse and complex history of the term, then, undoubtedly has been responsible in part for the difficulty of studying ideologies. Also, the heavy reliance on social scientific and historical approaches by rhetorical critics has tended to keep them from exploring the specifically rhetorical data inherent to ideologies.

To summarize, then, the approach to social movements offered here will be based on the following assumptions:

(1) That a truly rhetorical approach to social movements will deal with the relationship between the argumentative content of a social movement and the form which that content takes as it is conveyed to outside publics.

(2) That the ideology of a social movement is the most accessible source available to the critic who wishes to understand the interrelationship between content and form that is the rhetorical essence of a movement.

(3) That an examination of the discourse generated by a movement can provide indicators of both the formal and substantive aspects of ideology. Thus, within the framework of the content/form assumption, I will examine the discourse produced by a social movement in order to uncover and understand its ideology.

II.

The elusiveness of ideologies demands that a complete methodology for analyzing ideologies via discourse provide: (1) a definition of ideology and a means of operationalizing that definition for purposes of systematically analyzing the discourse; (2) a means of assessing both conscious and unconscious manifestations of ideology; and (3) a means of analyzing the discourse for the three basic components of any communication transaction--substance, style, and structure--for such ideological information.

I suggest a threefold methodology to accomplish these aims: a descriptive approach to provide a definition of ideology and to deal

primarily with the content of the ideology; a classification of discourse to determine ideological traits implicit in structural facets of the groups in a social movement; and a content analysis to pick up on stylistic evidences of ideology. These analyses are not meant to be mutually exclusive. Indeed, all three provide the critic with substantive, stylistic, and structural information. Each one, however, is seen as heuristically more capable than the others of providing particular kinds of data. An outline of the general methodological framework appears below.

I. Descriptive Analysis
   - A. Self-image
   - B. Central goal
   - C. Blueprint for the future
   - D. Identified enemy

II. Classification of Discourse
   - A. Amount and kinds of discourse
   - B. Purpose of the discourse
   - C. Audience addressed by the discourse

III. Content Analysis
   - A. Substantive features
     1. Number of references to ideological components
     2. Theme
     3. Type of action advocated
     4. Attitude toward theme
     5. System orientation
     6. Temporal orientation
   - B. Stylistic features

1. Type of sentence
2. Function of sentence
3. Lexical diversity

Descriptive Analysis

The initial approach to the discourse is a descriptive analysis. To begin, the critic first must decide on an operational definition of ideology. I propose that an ideology be described as encompassing the following components: (1) a group's self-image, or how it describes its origins, aims, strengths, and weaknesses; its relationship to the status quo; and its role in the social movement as a whole; (2) the central goal toward which the group directs its attention; (3) a blueprint for the future, or vision of what society ideally can be if the central goal is realized; and (4) who or what is identified as the enemy.[14]

With this definition in hand, the critic reviews the discourse of the group, then isolates and describes the four ideological components--self-image, central goal, blueprint for the future, and the identified enemy. On the basis of the discourse produced by the group, the critic draws tentative conclusions about the nature of the ideology operating in that group. Again, this portion of the methodology primarily aims at uncovering the ideological content which is disseminated consciously by the group.

Classification of Discourse

The second portion of the methodology is designed to examine the ideological features evident in structural aspects of the group. Rather than examining the organizational pattern or internal structure of each

piece of discourse, however, I chose to analyze the pattern of discourse of each group in the social movement. The resulting typology reveals features about the structure of each organization, how it operates, and the predominant forms of rhetorical interaction, thus serving as an additional indicator of less obvious ideological positions. This analysis involves the categorization of discourse according to: (1) the amount and kind of discourse available from the group; (2) the purpose for which the discourse is written; and (3) the audience to which the discourse is addressed.

To tabulate the amount and kinds of discourse, the critic records the number of documents in each of the following categories: brochures, general releases, letters and memos, conference reports, news releases, speeches, and essays. This categorization presumes that a group which disseminates materials of all of these types probably is appealing to wider publics than a group which confines its discourse to two or three forms; thus, the critic could speculate that the group's ideology also is more comprehensive, with a wider range of goals. Similarly, a group which utilizes the more formal categories of discourse such as brochures, essays, and conference reports, may be more institutionalized and rhetorically sophisticated than the group which produces mimeographed general releases. Or perhaps the group which depends on highly sophisticated forms may be primarily a lobbying group, more interested in influencing those in positions of power than with gaining grassroots support among the population at large.

A second means of categorizing discourse is according to its intended purpose--informative, actuative, or instructive. I use the term

"informative" to describe those pieces of discourse in which information-giving is the principal intent (e.g., materials which focus on explaining the group's beliefs). "Actuative" refers to those in which an audience is asked to take specific action (e.g., write your senators and representatives), while "instructive" documents are those in which the writer or speaker tells the audience how a specific task should be performed (e.g., how to set up a local chapter). Admittedly, these are not distinct and mutually exclusive categories. Yet, the task of deciding on the dominant purpose of each piece of discourse is one which the critic can manage with relative ease.

The type of audience for which the discourse is intended--general public, specific public, general membership, group leaders--also is useful in pointing out ideological differences. A group which directs most of its discourse to its own leaders suggests a hierarchical organization which must concentrate on its own operation to a degree that limits its capabilities for reaching outside publics. A group which concentrates on specific publics--i.e., those in positions of power, able to promote social change--may be a lobbying organization primarily, while a group which addresses general publics may be concerned principally with informing society about the need for change and possible ways of doing so. This survey, then, indicates whether a group's rhetoric is directed toward the achievement of group goals or whether it is at cross-purposes with it. For instance, a group which advocates grassroots support in order to achieve its aims, yet directs most of its discourse to its own members in order to maintain the organization, suggests a discrepancy between the ideology as theoretically conceived and that which operates in actuality.

The findings of a classification of discourse serve to supplement the descriptive analysis. By examining the configurations of discourse in terms of amount, type, purpose, and audience addressed, the critic receives additional information about implicit features of the ideology which would be less visible from a descriptive analysis alone.

Content Analysis

The final portion of the methodology is a content analysis of stylistic and substantive features of the discourse. Because of its objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the content of communication,[15] this technique is useful for uncovering the hidden, implied, or unconscious ideological traits. This analysis is included primarily to provide information about the ideological features inherent in style. Thematic features also can be subjected to a content analysis, however, and thus this analysis supplements the substantive findings of the descriptive analysis.

For the content analysis, I suggest that the critic employ the sentence--defined here as a statement terminally punctuated with a period, question mark, or exclamation point--as the basic coding unit for both the thematic and stylistic portions of the analysis.[16] Each sentence can be coded for the following substantive features:

(1) The frequency with which references to the four ideological components occur--i.e., how many times does the group mention its self-image, central goal, blueprint for the future, and identified enemy? The descriptive analysis will have provided detailed descriptions of these components. Thus, if a group's central goal is "revolution," each reference to this concept will be counted.

(2) Theme: what is the dominant issue (e.g., education, legislation, group structure) with which the sentence is concerned? This category primarily assesses the "central goal" component of the group's ideology.

(3) Type of action advocated: does the sentence espouse attitude change, explicit legal/political change, or no change--i.e., acceptance of the status quo? This category assesses the "blueprint for the future" component of an ideology.

(4) Attitude toward theme: does the sentence exhibit a favorable, neutral, or unfavorable attitude toward the issue under discussion?

(5) System orientation: is the sentence supportive of the status quo or of change--i.e., a proposed alternative to the status quo?

(6) Temporal orientation: is the sentence oriented toward past, present, or future ideas and events? These latter three categories are designed to deal with the self-image portion of the ideology.

A sentence such as "We live in a racist society," would be coded as follows: Theme - racism; type of action advocated - no change; attitude toward theme - neutral; system orientation - status quo; and temporal orientation - present. A sentence such as "Civil rights legislation is necessary to clarify countless ambiguities and inconsistencies in our legal system," on the other hand, would be rated as follows: Theme - legislation; type of action advocated - political; attitude toward theme - favorable; system orientation - change; and temporal orientation - future.

Coding sentences in this way for thematic variables offers a detailed portrait of the ideology implicit in the group's discourse. The critic then can compare this information with the ideological positions

compiled by means of the descriptive analysis and the data survey, and is able to draw conclusions about whether the group does indeed espouse the ideology it claims.

The stylistic portion of the content analysis also makes use of the sentence as the coding unit. Three measures useful for uncovering the ideological traits embedded in style are: (1) Type of sentence--simple, compound, or complex; (2) function of the sentence--declarative, exclamative, interrogative, imperative; and (3) lexical diversity, measured by a type-token ratio (TTR).

Richard Weaver has dealt extensively with the notion that different sentence structures--simple, compound, or complex--reveal different habits of mind or ways of viewing the world. He sees each of these types as having different rhetorical implications. The simple sentence tends to emphasize discrete phenomena because of its subject-verb-object pattern; it is "often the unconscious style of one who sees the world as a conglomerate of things," or of one who wishes to present certain objects or events against a uniform and flat background.[17] The complex sentence does not stop with the perception of discrete classes, as does the simple, "but distinguishes them according to rank or value, or places them in an order of cause and effect."[18] Finally, Weaver suggests that the tension produced by the two equal parts of a compound sentence is indicative of the stasis characteristic of persons who view the world as an equilibrium of congenial forces.[19] Thus, coding according to sentence type should allow the critic to distinguish subtle ideological differences embedded in language usage.

Whether a sentence is declarative, imperative, interrogative, or exclamatory also can be coded, although Weaver does not address himself

specifically to the implications of categorizing sentences in this manner. By extending Weaver's work with sentences, however, I arrived at several hypotheses concerning sentence function. First, a declarative sentence seems likely to be used by a group committed--perhaps inflexibly--to a particular position, while the use of imperatives would characterize a group which holds certain standards and demands that activities be carried out in predetermined ways. A group using large numbers of exclamatory sentences, on the other hand, might do so to emphasize radical ideas or new and unusual solutions. Finally, I predict that a group which frequently asks questions of its audiences wishes to stimulate the process of self-questioning among its members and/or outside publics. Coding sentence function, then, adds to the stylistic information gained from the analysis of sentence type; both provide the critic with supplementary data about the unconscious ideological features of a piece of discourse.

Lexical diversity is a final stylistic measure useful for assessing ideological differences among the groups in a social movement. An examination of the diversification of vocabulary in a piece of discourse has been found to correspond to different habits of mind and ways of perceiving the world. A person with a large vocabulary (i.e., high lexical diversity) often is more flexible and open to a wide range of ideas, than is the person who consistently uses the same words and phrases (i.e., low lexical diversity). The most common measurement of lexical diversity is the type-token ratio (TTR), first introduced by Johnson in 1939.[20] TTR is computed by dividing the number of different words in a specific sample (types) by the total number of words in that sample (tokens).[21]

Thus, a content analysis of both stylistic and substantive features

enables the critic to distinguish subtle ideological differences among the groups in a social movement. This information can serve either to confirm or disconfirm the findings of the descriptive analysis, in which obvious ideological features were compiled.

III.

What remains is the application of the proposed methodology to an actual social movement. For this purpose, I chose to analyze the ideology of contemporary feminism. Beyond a personal interest in the women's movement, I selected this movement because many critics as well as feminists argue that its major weakness is the lack of a coherent ideology. Sarah Slavin Schramm, a member of the National Organization for Women, expresses this point of view when she says: "There has never been an overarching ideology in the women's movement . . . and this has been unfortunate."[22] Campbell also sees an ideology as lacking and thus refuses to define feminism as a social movement: "Whatever the phrase 'women's liberation' means, it cannot, as yet, be used to refer to a cohesive historical-political movement. No clearly defined program or set of policies unifies the small, frequently transitory groups."[23] The methodology offered here, then, seems especially valuable for studying a movement in which the ideology is not clearly evident.

Because one person could not deal feasibly with all of the discourse from the entire women's movement since its inception, certain temporal and spatial limitations were imposed to make manageable this study of feminist ideology. First, three feminist organizations--Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), the National Organization for Women (NOW), and The Feminists--were selected for examination. These groups were chosen

because they seemed to represent the conservative, moderate, and radical positions within the women's movement, respectively. The National Organization for Women attempts to serve as an umbrella group for the entire movement and thus suggests a moderate feminist viewpoint. The Feminists, representative of the radical branch of the movement, split off from NOW because its members objected to NOW's hierarchical structure. Instead, this group advocates the overthrowing of all male-constructed institutions. WEAL, on the other hand, was formed by dissatisfied NOW member who left because they objected to the group's abortion-on-demand platform; thus WEAL represents the conservative branch of the movement. The decision to deal with three groups from the spectrum of feminist positions allows for the inclusion, in a sense, of every group, and at the same time makes possible a survey of the ideological features of the movement as a whole.

As a means of limiting the temporal scope of this study, only the emergence phase of contemporary feminist was considered. The "emergence phase" is defined here as the period from NOW's formation in 1966 through the end of 1970. Several factors suggest that by 1971, feminism had entered a stable, if not wholly-institutionalized phase, and had become accepted as a legitimate social-political phenomenon.[24]

Descriptive Analysis

For the descriptive analysis, I purused the entire body of discourse available from each group--NOW, The Feminists, and WEAL--while concentrating on those documents in which the fundamental facts about an organization, such as its origins, basic beliefs, and major activities, were discussed. I assumed that these pieces of discourse would be most likely to contain the four ideological components for which I was looking--

self-image, central goal, blueprint for the future, and identified enemy.

The descriptive analysis of the three groups revealed strong ideological differences among the groups. In terms of self-image, NOW sees itself as the major civil rights organization for women; thus the group deals with a wide spectrum of issues and employs a variety of tactics. Both The Feminists and WEAL, on the other hand, hold more specialized self-images. The Feminists sees itself as responsible for the development of feminist theory, while WEAL focuses on educational and employment concerns.[25] Similar differences emerge in terms of the central goals of NOW, WEAL, and The Feminists. WEAL calls for "responsible rebellion," NOW seeks "equal partnership with men," and The Feminists demands a complete revolution.[26] The blueprints for the future also point to the different ideological orientations of the three groups: NOW sees the ideal society as one where women are equal to men, WEAL sees it as one where women have achieved "real dignity" for themselves, and The Feminists visualizes a classless society of equal human beings, in which the oppressive institutions that currently prevail no longer exist.[27] Finally, in regard to the identification of the enemy, both NOW and WEAL conceive of discrimination as the opposition, which they portray as an observable, but impersonal, set of behaviors. The Feminists, on the other hand, blames men and their institutions for women's plight.[28]

Overall, then, WEAL appears to be the most conservative group ideologically, narrowing its focus and tactics to traditional concerns. The Feminists, in contrast, is radical: the group advocates a total restructuring of society as it now exists. NOW includes portions of both positions in its ideology; while agreeing to some extent with The Feminists'

call for militancy, it also makes use of legal channels for change and hopes women can share in, rather than destroy, the current social system.

The descriptive analysis suggests, then, that the ideologies of the three groups differ in major ways. I hypothesized as a result of these findings that the classification of discourse and the content analysis not only would support the results of the descriptive analysis, but would reveal significant statistical differences among the three groups in terms of ideology.

Classification of Discourse

An inspection and categorization of the types of discourse from each group was the second method employed to distinguish ideological differences among NOW, The Feminists, and WEAL. This survey proceeded on the assumption that not only the actual content of pieces of discourse, but the overall configuration of discourse produced by a group is an important indicator of ideology. First, each piece of discourse from the three groups was placed into one of seven categories: brochures, general releases, letters and memos, conference reports, news releases, speeches, and essays. The results confirmed the ideological differences suggested by the descriptive analysis. NOW generated substantially more discourse (77.8%) than did The Feminists (12.0%) or WEAL (10.2%). NOW also was the only group that used all seven categories of discourse. NOW used letters and memos with greatest frequency (33.5%), The Feminists preferred speeches (38.0%), and WEAL used general releases most often (66.6%).

The purpose of each piece of discourse also was categorized as either informative, actuative, or instructive. The speeches of Ti-Grace Atkinson, founder of The Feminists, exemplify the informative category.

Although not devoid of suggestions, her discourse primarily is concerned with the presentation and defense of radical notions about the restructuring of traditional institutions.[29] NOW's brochures illustrate the actuative category; despite extensive informative portions about the nature of the organization, almost half of each brochure is devoted to urging membership in NOW.[30] Finally, WEAL's general releases contain examples of instructive discourse. The document, "Easy Steps to Organizing a WEAL Chapter," for example, is a list of the steps to take when forming a local chapter.[31] All three groups use informative discourse more than either actuative or instructive (NOW 51.2%; The Feminists 100%; WEAL 45.0%). This type of discourse seems to be basic to an emergence phase, when a new movement must justify its existence and seek support. That every piece of The Feminists' discourse was categorized as informative is what one might expect; as the group committed to restructuring society, it first must inform people of the need to change as well as present possible methods for implementing such change. In contrast, a large proportion of WEAL's discourse (22.2%) is devoted to instructing; WEAL seems to see itself as a group to which women can turn to learn the skills they need to participate effectively in society.

Finally, the type of audience for which the discourse was intended--general public, specific public, general membership, group leaders--also was determined. Documents which began with a heading such as "Dear Friends," were categorized as "general public." The category "specific public" included discourse addressed to government officials or other individuals in positions of power, while documents of potential interest to all members of the organization--e.g., those addressed to "NOW members"--were classified under

the heading of "general membership." Finally, the "group leaders" category encompassed all documents addressed specifically to those in decision-making positions within the groups--i.e., presidents of local chapters. The results of this tabulation showed that NOW sends the highest proportion of its discourse (53.1%) to its own members and leaders, suggesting a large, institutionalized group in which decisions must filter down through various levels. All of The Feminists' discourse is directed to general publics (100%), showing that the group prefers to devote its time and energy to outside publics rather than to standard, organizational concerns. WEAL sends the major portion of its discourse to the general public (50.5%), suggesting a concern for the needs of women in society. The neglect of news releases and essays by WEAL--forms likely to reach wide audiences--suggests a disinterest in publicity, an image consistent with WEAL's desire to work behind the scenes to achieve its goals. Thus, a tabulation of the amount and kinds, purpose, and audiences addressed by the discourse of NOW, WEAL, and The Feminists supports, adds to, and refines the details of the ideological portraits suggested by the descriptive analysis.

Content Analysis

A content analysis was the final method used to examine the ideological features of the three groups. Of the total 175 pieces of discourse collected from the three groups in the course of this study, fifty-one were subjected to content analysis. This sample consisted of all of the pieces of discourse in the "speeches" and "general releases" categories. These categories were selected for several reasons: (1) speeches and general releases were categories for which pieces of discourse from all three organizations were available; (2) these categories allowed for an

examination of both oral and written modes of discourse; and (3) both individual presentations (speeches) and the products of group effort (general releases) were represented.

The discourse first was subjected to a substantive analysis. Each sentence was coded for the thematic measures proposed in the methodology--a frequency count of references to ideological components, theme, type of action, attitude toward theme, system orientation, and temporal orientation. I began by counting the number of references made by each group to its stated self-image, central goal, blueprint for the future, and identified enemy. Thus, for NOW, I counted all references to "major civil rights organization for women" (NOW's self-image); "equal partnership with men" (its central goal); "equality with men" (its blueprint for the future); and "discrimination" (its identified enemy). The same was done for WEAL and The Feminists.

To code for the major thematic concerns, I read over the discourse of the groups to get an idea of the types of themes present. The final list of twenty categories included the following themes: education and training; employment; feminist legislation; power, politics, and the system; psychological traits; sexual concerns; marriage and the family; love; women's movement; group structure and functioning; feminist theory; revolution; violence; women acting autonomously; religion; the military; public accommodations; other minorities; human nature in general; and miscellaneous. A sentence such as "Campus 'commissions on the status of women' were nonexistent"[32] was placed in the "Education and Training" category, while the sentence, "The early group, unhappy with the NOW-type hierarchy, tended to have no structure at all"[33] was coded under "Group Structure and Functioning."

In the "type of action" category, I wished to determine whether a group focused primarily on attitude change, explicit legal and political change, or simply reinforced the status quo. The following sentence is an example of a reference to "attitude change": "We women must ask ourselves why we pair off with men."[34]

In the "attitude toward theme" category, the stance toward a particular issue was coded as favorable, neutral, or unfavorable. The neutral category included those sentences in which lukewarm attitudes were expressed, as well as those in which no attitude was evident. The following sentence illustrates one of these categories--"unfavorable toward feminist position": "However, there has been almost no effort, either in the last movement or the present one, to articulate a systematic political theory."[35]

Included in the category termed "system orientation" were two positions: the status quo and a feminist position. A reference to the status quo is found in the following sentence: "The hostility between the sexes has never been worse."[36]

In the "temporal orientation" category, each sentence was coded for its concern with events or ideas in the past, present, or future. An example of a sentence coded as a "past reference" is: "I remember the cold, winter day when we took the bus to Albany and proposed this startling new bill of rights for women to the New York Constitutional Convention."[37]

A rater reliability check then was performed to validate my coding of the sentences. Nine of the fifty-one pieces of discourse (approximately 18 percent) were coded again by me and by another rater.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) using Wilks Lambda criteria, was employed to test for significant thematic differences among

the variables. There were not overall significant differences in the types of themes discussed by each group. Taken separately, however (i.e., the univariate F-ratios were inspected), fourteen categories differed significantly across groups:

Education and training

Status quo, favorable

Status quo, neutral

Status quo, unfavorable

Feminist legislation

Status quo, unfavorable

Power, politics, and the system

Status quo, neutral

Status quo, unfavorable

Feminist position, neutral

Psychological traits

Feminist position, neutral

Feminist position, unfavorable

Women's movement

Feminist position, unfavorable

Group structure and functioning

Feminist position, unfavorable

Feminist theory

Feminist position, unfavorable

Other minorities

Feminist position, neutral

Human nature in general

Status quo, unfavorable

Of the five other thematic measures--a frequency count of references to ideological components, type of action, attitude toward theme, system orientation, and temporal orientation--three categories were statistically different among the groups. These were "attitude change" in the type of action category; "future orientation" in the temporal orientation category; and the frequency of occurrence of the word "discrimination."

For the stylistic analysis, each sentence was coded twice--for sentence type (simple, compound, or complex) and for sentence function (declarative, exclamative, imperative, interrogative). In addition, lexical diversity was measured by means of a type-token ratio. To determine TTR, each piece of discourse first was divided into twenty-five word segments. This segment length was selected because many of the pieces of discourse in the data sample were short--often not much longer than twenty-five words. In addition, TTR is easy to compute in segments of this length.

The multivariate analysis of variance for the stylistic variables revealed no overall significant differences among organizations. Neither were any individual F-ratios significantly different among NOW, The Feminists, and WEAL. Thus, there was no evidence that the discourse of any of the groups stylistically is distinct.

IV.

The content analysis revealed that the three women's groups--NOW, The Feminists, and WEAL--do not differ extensively in terms of the substantive or stylistic features of their discourse. Of the 120 thematic combinations possible, fourteen were found to differ significantly, while

no stylistic categories proved significant across NOW, The Feminists, and WEAL.

These results can be interpreted in several ways: (1) the stylistic and thematic variables selected for the content analysis simply are not strong indicators of ideological differences; (2) stylistic and thematic descriptors are inadequate for revealing ideologies; (3) the methodology is a reliable way of determining the ideological nature of a social movement; thus, there is the intriguing possibility that a single rather than diverse ideologies are operating in the women's movement; (4) each of the groups emphasizes or gives priority to certain themes, which gives the appearance of strong ideological differences on the surface.

The least fallible and therefore safest interpretation probably is the last one; the others need to be subjected to further research in order to be proved or disproved. Thus, although the hypotheses of this study were not confirmed--i.e., I did not find strong ideological differences from the content analysis to support the descriptive analysis and the classification of discourse--the three groups do exhibit some differences in the emphasis they give to certain themes and in the functions they fulfill for the movement as a whole.

Generally, the results of this threefold methodology indicate that the women's movement revolves around NOW in the role of moderator, with WEAL and The Feminists assuming more specialized functions. Having a group which assumes the role of facilitator may well be the most advantageous feature of the women's movement: with NOW able to coordinate and encompass all feminist activity, the movement can make immediate changes in society (WEAL's emphasis) without losing sight of the need for a radical

restructuring of that society (The Feminists' ideal). In addition, the refusal of contemporary feminists collectively to agree on a single set of priorities allows the movement to attract and to accommodate women, as well as men, of all social classes, backgrounds, and interests. This capacity for wide appeal is essential for the women's movement; the large audience it needs to gain the recognition crucial for success might not have materialized had a single issue become dominant. And without a crystallization and narrowing of goals, the movement may be able to continue to encompass and use to advantage its diversification. Sehested suggests the potential of such an approach:

> So long as networks of communication and interaction remain open among the diversified groups existing under the rubric of the women's movement . . . refinement of an ideology can continue. As of 1974, no one group has the "truth"--the accurate vision of the future or the successful means to attain those goals. The development of the ideology must not be limited to one person or to one small group and then imposed upon all others by means of propaganda and proselytizing. Rather, to be truly successful, it must be a collective development, which comes to be out of the "give and take" of interaction.[38]

This study, then, may have accomplished little more than to point out similarities among the groups in the women's movement which on the surface appear quite disparate, and to suggest that the apparent diversity may be a conscious as well as a beneficial strategy for the movement as a whole.

V.

The generally inconclusive results of this study demand that the methodology proposed here be critically reviewed, modified, and tested on other social movements. Perhaps other stylistic categories--i.e., adjectives, nouns, or conjunctions--which Weaver also included in his "rhetoric of grammatical categories" might have revealed differences indistinguishable at the relatively gross level of sentence structure. Also, categories other than speeches and general releases could be subjected to a content analysis; that ideological differences would appear in brochures or conference reports, but not in speeches and general releases, is a distinct possibility. On the other hand, perhaps no stylistic or thematic variables of any kind will reveal strong ideological differences, even if they are there. If this possibility is substantiated by future research, the form/content assumption seems highly questionable.

Not all of the contributions of this study are as tenuous as those concerning methodology. This study did suggest that a composite methodology offers the critic a built-in system of checks and balances for verifying initial judgments. This study also fared well as a model for critics interested in studying social movements. The task of gathering and examining the vast amounts of discourse was made easier by limiting the study to one phase of the movement, selecting three representative groups for investigation, and subjecting only two categories of discourse to content analysis. Similar constraints can be imposed by critics in other studies of social movements in order to reduce the gargantuan task to manageable proportions without losing perspective on the movement as a whole.

A side effect of this study, too, is the collection of discourse

which now is easily accessible to other critics for analysis. Critics might investigate in more depth the nature of the discourse and its relationship to the aims of the groups. Also necessary are studies which evaluate, rather than merely describe, the manner in which the groups use discourse. The directions for inquiry remain almost limitless. And although this study itself leaves many questions unanswered, hopefully it will prove provocative at least to critics concerned about the state of social movement research.

NOTES

[1]The form/content assumption is a general label for a relationship that has been described in various ways, including style/substance; manner of presentation/subject matter; external/internal aspects of discourse; idiom/semantics; and communication/content.

[2]Aristotle Rhetoric 3.1.

[3]Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argument, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), pp. 142-43.

[4]Robert S. Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," Western Speech, 36 (Spring 1972), 86.

[5]Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," Central States Speech Journal, 27 (Summer 1976), 91.

[6]Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 59 (February 1973), 75.

[7]Herbert Blumer, "Social Movements," in Studies in Social Movements, ed. Barry McLaughlin (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 19.

[8]C. Wendell King, Social Movements in the United States (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 32.

[9]Marilyn Van Graber, "Functional Criticism: A Rhetoric of Black Power," in Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism, eds. Charles J. Stewart, Donovan J. Ochs, and Gerald P. Mohrmann (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), p. 207.

[10]Edwin Black, "The Second Persona," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56 (April 1970), 119.

[11]Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), p. 55.

[12]Hans Toch, The Social Psychology of Social Movements (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 26.

[13]John Adams, The Life and Works of John Adams (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1851), 6:403, cited in Ideology, Politics, and Political Theory, ed. Richard H. Cox (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1969), p. 1.

[14]These four components essentially consist of a synthesis derived from a variety of sources on the subject. Roberta Ash, for example in Social Movements in America (Chicago: Markham, 1972), p. 21, considers goals, tactics, and general constructions of reality as fundamental components of an ideology. Oberschall's treatment of ideologies also includes elements similar to those suggested in this paper. More specific than Ash, Oberschall focuses on the fixing of blame (which I have termed the enemy) and on a vision of a better society (blueprint for the future). See Anthony Oberschall, Social Conflict and Social Movements (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 182-84.

[15]Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1952), p. 18.

[16]The sentence as a coding unit has been used with apparently fruitful results in numerous other studies which employ content analysis. Robert Stanley Wachal ("Linguistic Evidence, Statistical Inference, and Disputed Authority," Diss. University of Wisconsin 1966, pp. 59-68) compares the studies which have used sentences and finds these more prevalent as a coding unit than individual words. Such studies have ranged from

showing that compositions belonging to a particular genre consistently contain sentences of certain lengths, to noting that authorship largely can be determined on the basis of sentence type.

[17]Weaver, pp. 119-20.

[18]Ibid., pp. 120-21.

[19]Ibid., p. 124.

[20]Wendell Johnson, "Language and Speech Hygiene: An Application of General Semantics," General Semantics Monographs, 1 (1939), pp. 10-12. Johnson suggests that the type-token ratio might serve as a measure of frustration or disorientation, with such phenomena as the "one track mind" amenable to quantitative treatment. He also posits that this ratio might measure the "stimulation value" of a situation; the more stimulating a situation, the higher the TTR of the person responding verbally to it.

[21]For example, the TTR for the sentence, "Meaning, then, is not only the effect of words on human minds and bodies but on the environmental reality as created in a given culture" is 23/25. From Hugh Dalziel Duncan, Communication and Social Order (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 37.

[22]Nancy Greenberg, "The Big Battle at the Top of NOW," Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, 24 October 1975, sec. A, p. 33.

[23]Campbell, p. 74.

[24]By 1971, (1) The Equal Rights Amendment--a major goal of the movement--had passed the House of Representatives, to be followed by Senate passage in March 1972. (2) Following the highly successful 26 August 1970 "Strike for Equality," the press showed signs of dealing seriously with the women's movement. (See, for example, the New York

Times editorial, 28 August 1970, p. 24). (3) NOW recognized lesbianism as a legitimate feminist concern, an indication that unpopular issues no longer were feared as endangering the movement's survival. (4) The first issue of Ms. magazine, a highly commercial, national feminist publication, appeared in January 1971, evidence of a substantial public for feminist views.

[25]The "N.O.W. Bill of Rights for 1969" [1968], for example, discusses NOW's wide range of concerns: ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, revision of tax and social security laws, the prohibition of sex discrimination in public facilities, the instigation of a nation-wide system of child care, paid maternity leaves, equal employment opportunities, revision of the way women are portrayed in the media, etc. The Feminists' self-image as theoretical mainstay is evident in the following passage: "To challenge his power requires a double thrust: First, with an idea, a new truth, a counter-reality which is the content of our revolution (Pamela Kearon, "Rules and Responsibilities in a Leaderless Revolutionary (Feminist) Group," October 1969, p. 2). Finally, the first paragrah of a WEAL brochure [1968] illustrates the group's focus on education and employment: "Women are being called upon to carry heavier economic responsibilities than ever before. . . . if women are now expected to accept full responsibilities for supporting themselves and, often their dependents, they must be allowed to prepare themselves and to compete equally in the job market."

[26]See "WEAL" brochure; "N.O.W. Goals," brochure [2 February 1974]; and Kearon, "Rules and Responsibilities," p. 2, which states directly the central goal of The Feminists: "The Feminists was created to effect a

revolution. We want to change the world."

[27]NOW's "Statement of Purpose," 29 October 1966, p. 2, summarizes the group's ideal: "to win for women the final right to be fully free and equal human beings." WEAL's vision of "real dignity" is evident in the following passage: "It is only natural that women--along with other groups of human beings--should now seek equalities that will permit them to live with real dignity in contemporary American society" ("WEAL" brochure). Finally, The Feminists' visualization of a classless society of equals is exemplified in the general release entitled "Organizational Principles and Structure, n.d., p. 5: "Organized on the basis of equality, we will offer the alternative for the future society."

[28]That "discrimination" is seen by NOW as the enemy was evident early in its "Statement of Purpose" (p. 1), and is the basis of its rationale for organizing: "We organize to . . . break through the silken curtain of prejudice and discrimination against women." Discrimination holds a similarly important place in WEAL's rationale. The following excerpt from remarks made by Elizabeth J. Kuck, a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, appears on the first fold of the WEAL brochure: "'Discrimination based on sex is just as real as discrimination based on race or religion or color or national origin and just as unlawful under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Yet it is so deeply embedded in the American way of life and the American way of business that few people recognize it as discrimination and fewer still understand that it is illegal.'" The Feminists' labeling of men as the enemy is far more specific than the impersonal "discrimination" identified by NOW and WEAL: "Right now we are living in a male universe. The male

NOW WEAL

defines the terms of our existence, the limits of our growth. . . . He has done everything necessary to undermine our individuality and contaminate us with his TRUTHS" (Kearon, "Rules and Responsibilities," p. 1).

[29]See, for example, Atkinson, "The Political Woman," in Amazon Odyssey (New York: Link Books, 1974), pp. 89-93.

[30]See, for example, "National Organization for Women: An Invitation to Join," n.d.

[31]WEAL, "Easy Steps to Organizing a WEAL Chapter," n.d., p. 1, WEAL file, Women's Collection, Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois.

[32]Bernice Sandler, "The Day WEAL Opened Pandora's Box," reprinted from Chronicle of Higher Education, 7 (January 22, 1973), p. 8.

[33]Janine Sade, "History of the Equality Issue in the Contemporary Women's Movement," 21 November 1969, p. 2, The Feminists file, Northwestern University Library.

[34]Atkinson, "The Political Woman," p. 92.

[35]Atkinson, "Metaphysical Cannibalism or Self-Creativity," in Amazon Odyssey, p. 77.

[36]Betty Friedan, "Abortion: A Woman's Civil Right," 14 February 1969, p. 8, NOW file, Northwestern University Library.

[37]Friedan, "Report of the NOW President," March 1970, p. 1, NOW file, Northwestern University Library.

[38]Glenda J. Sehested, "A Sociological Examination of the Women's Movement," Women and Public Policy: A Humanistic Perspective, ed. Mildred Lavin and Clara H. Oleson (Iowa City: University of Iowa Institute of Public Affairs, 1974), pp. 140-41.